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ABSTRACT

Questions aimed at better school-community relations through identification of problems and courses of positive action were pursued at a seminar. Positive statements were presented by a citizen, a businessman, and an educator; and discussions were launched from the propositions, problems, and points raised in these papers. This report consists of the three statements in total and a summary of the discussions pertinent to them. The final section of the report enumerates the conclusions drawn from the meeting. (Author)

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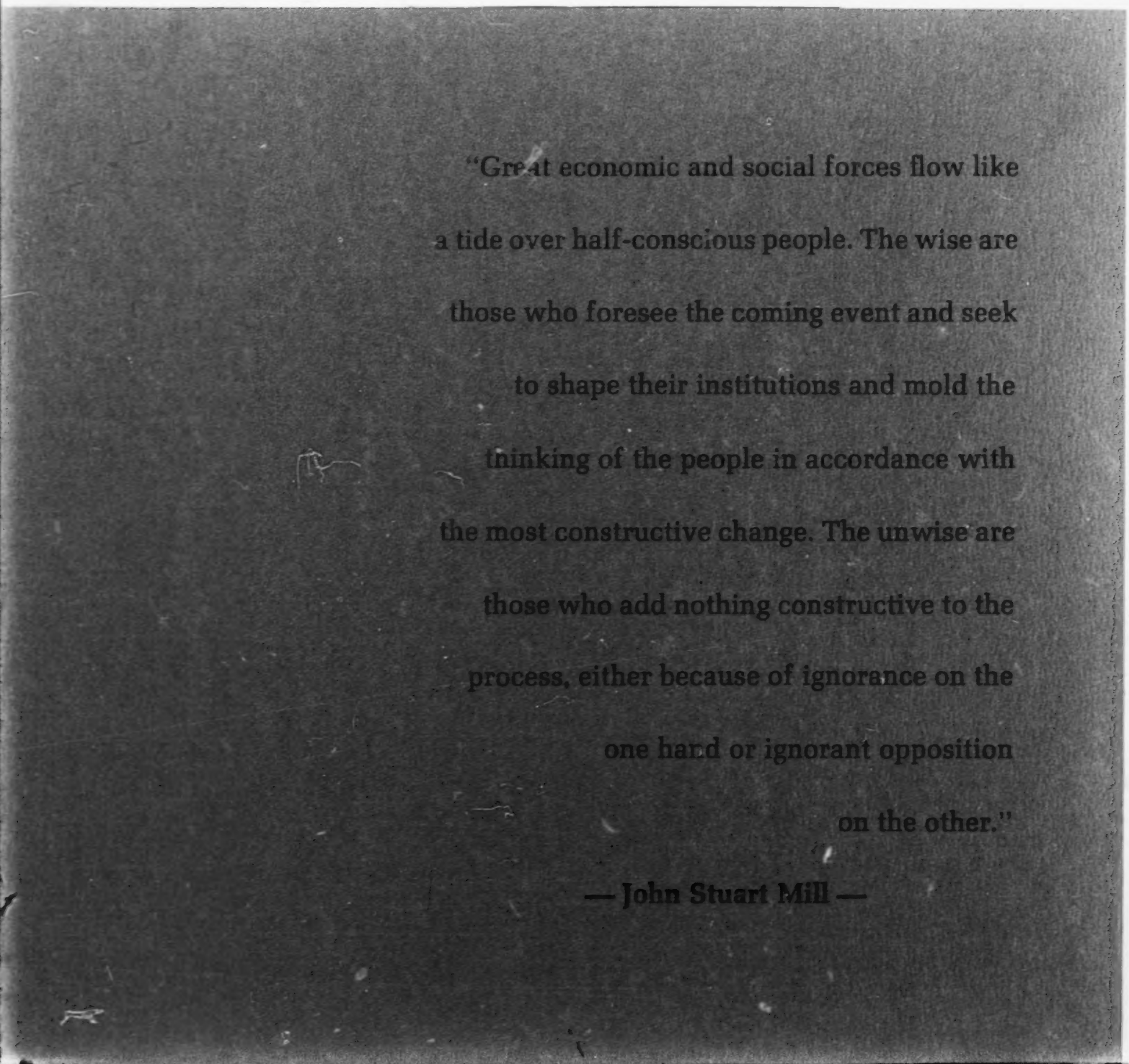
"Great economic and social forces flow like
a tide over half-conscious people. The wise are
those who foresee the coming event and seek
to shape their institutions and mold the
thinking of the people in accordance with
the most constructive change. The unwise are
those who add nothing constructive to the
process, either because of ignorance on the
one hand or ignorant opposition
on the other."
— John Stuart Mill —

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CITIZENS, BUSINESSMEN, AND EDUCATORS:

THE ELEMENTS TO BETTER SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

An Occasional Paper

The report of a seminar sponsored by
Thomas Alva Edison Foundation,
Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., and
The Johnson Foundation

Fall 1972

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THE CITIZEN'S NEW VOICE

Rare indeed is the educator who can remain isolated from the public eye today. Within the last several years education has become big news.

The public school system is based on the concept that the schools belong to the people. This dictates the involvement of lay people to the extent that they can constructively contribute. This noble concept was accepted but unexercised beyond the voting booth by the majority of the populace in the past. Apathy toward involvement was accepted graciously by educational administrators who enjoyed the expediency of operating schools without laymen's interference. In the days before "participatory democracy" would-be school critics rarely got far. Most citizens assumed that the educators knew what they were doing and that the schools were tolerably successful.

Events of recent years have caused many concerned citizens to decide that educators are operating the schools by habit more than by any fundamental, professional body of knowledge. Goaded by soaring taxation that seems to buy nothing new or better; alarmed by vandalism, arson, misbehavior, confrontations and the widespread use of drugs; and exasperated by the school's seeming inability to respond adequately, the public is not put off as easily as it was formerly.

Education has become a hot issue. The probing citizen asks more pointed questions in an increasingly demanding tone. He wants answers. The schools need help not just to improve their image but to perform better service through using those elements that constitute the communities which the schools serve.

Can the community be effective in working in the schools? What are the constraints, and what are the tensions that may arise? These and other questions aimed at better school-community relations through identification of problems and courses of positive action were pursued at a seminar sponsored by the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, The Johnson Foundation, and the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., *an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.*

The basic question on which the seminar opened centered on the issue of whether or not educators really want community involvement in the schools. "If they do, is it not in a rather circumscribed way such as assistance for the passage of millage and school bonds, or volunteers to watch the lunchroom and playground?" a businessman queried. "If the educator is saying 'Yes, I do want community involvement,' is he prepared to accept this involvement without any strings attached?" An educator retorted that the citizens legally control the schools through

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These and other questions were pursued via the three elements that constitute, separately and together, school-community relations. They are citizens, businessmen, and educators. Position statements were presented by a member of each of these elements and the discussions were launched from the propositions, the problems, and the points they raised. This report consists of those statements in total and a summary of the discussions pertinent to them. The final section of the report enumerates the conclusions drawn from the meeting.

The views expressed in the paper are not contradictions in writing but differences of opinion expressed by men and women who were selected by the sponsors because of the valuable service they have rendered to better school-community relations in their respective geographic areas.

SESSION I

THE CITIZEN ELEMENT

A Position Statement

A CITIZEN'S VIEWPOINT ON SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Charles L. Weltner
Erstwhile U.S. Congressman
Attorney-at-Law
Atlanta, Georgia

A man's viewpoint is of necessity shaped by the ground on which he stands. So perhaps I might define that ground very briefly at the outset. I am a product of the public schools of the state of Georgia. Each one of my four children has attended those schools. As a taxpayer, I am a partial provider of the service dispensed there. As a voter, living in a system based upon an elected school board and an appointed superintendent, I am partially responsible for the quality of that service. Further, I sense very keenly that America, as a whole, is the product of its public schools. The good we know can be attributed to a broadening of educational opportunity. The ills of the day also can be charged to the failures of the educational system.

Increasingly, schools are becoming the focal point of important public issues. This is not surprising in view of the vast increase in the number of students and the heavy weight that

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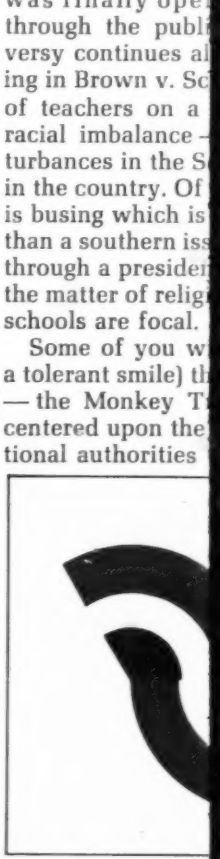

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Increasingly, schools are becoming the focal point of important public issues. This is not surprising in view of the vast increase in the number of students and the heavy weight that youthful thought and life patterns have cast upon the balances of American life. Down South, for instance, the old wound of racism was finally opened and is being aerated through the public schools. But the controversy continues almost 15 years after the ruling in Brown v. School Board. The assignment of teachers on a racial basis — to eliminate racial imbalance — was cause for great disturbances in the South and perhaps elsewhere in the country. Of course, another big problem is busing which is perhaps more of a northern than a southern issue, as anyone who has lived through a presidential primary well knows. In the matter of religion or religious freedom, the schools are focal.

Some of you will remember (with perhaps a tolerant smile) the Scopes Trial in Tennessee — the Monkey Trial, it was called — which centered upon the question of whether educational authorities could order the teaching of religious tenets. In recent years the issues of prayer in schools and observances of religious holidays have raised anew the same question. Is the state the custodian of the spiritual growth of its youth? Well, I should hope not, but there is still substantial divergence of opinion.

Then, with what we call the youth rebellion, the authorities facing the assault have often been school authorities. All of the long-held preserves of school authorities including dress, length of hair, R.O.T.C., recruiting on campus by war-related industries, and performance by universities of war research have long since been invaded, thus raising new questions of the rightful scope of authority in the educational process. Other issues such as the draft, co-residential dormitories, marijuana, and abortion have put the schools in the midst of the news. This is not to mention the phenomenon a year or so ago of the campus riots over curriculum, Viet Nam, or whatever.

Now, in the face of all the explosion of news — controversial news at that — I suppose the "image" of the school is not doing so well. Older people are horrified by style of dress and manner of speech. The professional "patriots" of America are appalled at the hesitance college students have for killing or being killed in a senseless war. The moralists bemoan the open admission of sexual practices which they very discreetly covered during their own youth. The traditionalists are at a loss to understand the reluctance of young people to accept all the values of their elders (which in one century so far have produced a depression, four major wars, world chaos, and a drug subculture). The economic conservatives blanch at the prospect of new school taxes and new federal appropriations to finance a bunch of shiftless, hairy kids who do not seem to believe in the American system of "enlightened self-interest" anyway! Then, too, we have the hysterical housewives who are sure every principal is selling heroin on the side and want the Federal Bureau of Investigation to lead an official inquiry. Well, so much for the communications problems of the schools.

I guess when you come right down to it, the problem is not **lack** of communication but **too much** communication! The media faithfully reports what happens, the editorialists write columns, and the boys down at the barber shop read it all and pronounce it bad. Anyway, I consider it to be somewhat silly for school authorities to try to figure out ways to change the reporting of what happens on campus or for public relations people to jimmy around with what they call "image."

What needs to be changed is not communications, public **appreciation** of what happens on campus, or image or rapport with the community. What needs to be changed is **what takes place on campus!** The unhappy fact is that the public schools are not performing anywhere near the level required if America is to have anything valuable to say to the world about human life over the next hundred years.

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There are three specific criticisms I wish to make about public education:

1. School administrators, like all bureaucrats, have become more and more immersed in procedures and policies, while their **mission** recedes further from sight.
2. Teachers' organizations have become almost exclusively unions for more pay and less work.
3. Traditional school sanctioned parent groups are interested only in new playground equipment, and alumni associations at the higher education level are interested only in varsity sports, particularly football.

These criticisms are criticisms of motivation, of course. Looking one step deeper, perhaps it is no great wonder that the present system of education fails to catch up an entire populace in enthusiasm and devotion.

In spite of our protestations to the contrary, the major, if not exclusive, thrust of American education is to teach somebody how to make a living — to make money. American education has become a **security device.** It is little wonder that the dropout generation exists in such profusion when one bears in mind that they have looked about them and seen in their own middle-class homes the net result of American materialism and the living death that too often comes in its wake.

Being a security device, American education transmits practically nothing of the other cultures of the world as diverse, valuable, and compelling as they are. It is all drawn down to a Westernized, franchised sort of a world, with Americans doing what is right and all other cultures somewhere else. No world view is evident in American education beyond the study of the quaint habits of "foreigners" which is usually concluded by the fourth year of elementary school.

As yet, American education presents no real

way of placing within the grasp of a single man the two hemispheres of arts and sciences. The former is presented in a haphazard manner with no adequate structure for developing a rational comprehension of the thoughts and thinking patterns that constitute the whole experience of mankind. Philosophical disciplines which have consumed the best minds of history are taught and presented in a way to be totally and utterly unrelated to any single day in the life of a man and, far less, to his everyday life. Science, the other hemisphere, is conceived primarily as another means of making a profit. "Commercial application," we call it. Further, the quantum jump in quantity of information, newly developed, has far outdistanced abilities to collate, distill, and assimilate.

Basically, the problem of education is this. It contains little that can lead the thoughtful, sensate person into any degree of comprehension about the deep meaning of his own life and the significance of his single life in the process of history. Little is presented that goes beyond the authoritarian, the moralistic, or the cynical, and leads forth into an understanding of life as something more than seeking and gaining economic advantage or feeling "good" about things. There is very little that brings a person face-to-face with himself, his responsibility to the future, his own unique value as a single element of humanity, and his potential for lasting engagement in the civilizing process.

I grew up in a day when senior classes of high schools still chose Latin mottoes. Ours was *Esse quam videre* — "To be, rather than to appear." Now that is a fit goal for educators who are worried about image, public acceptance, press, and support in the next bond election. Educators should forget about appearing worthy of responsibility and be responsible.

GAINING A PIECE OF THE ACTION

The direct participation of informal but organized lay groups in the determination of the purposes, plans, and policies of public education in the United States has been increasing rapidly in the last decade. This trend toward broader citizen participation in the educational process is of major significance for professional as w
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The question is not "Will the community participate?" but "How can community participation be advantageous?" An independently organized group of citizens with little access to the facts and operating without professional advice may understandably work at cross-purposes with the board of education and the professional educators.

"Too often in schools, we accuse the citizenry of being apathetic. I suspect they really are alienated," a discussant asserted. "They do not feel that schools want them to participate unless it is for a bond drive or similar material effort."

When the school is receptive to the involvement of local citizens, ways and means of effective participation are not difficult to find. One valuable way in which citizens can participate is in the development of long-range plans for education in the community. However, it is not enough for the school to keep the community informed; it is equally

important that the school be kept informed about the community.

An important resource which few school systems are utilizing is the use of the community survey of school problems and needed changes. "The use of the community survey will show the public's confidence in the school system and can clearly indicate whether the school officials need to change their attitudes in particular areas," a superintendent said. He also recommended the need for unsigned evaluations of the administration by the school staff and faculty. "Even the percentage of returns of such evaluations is an indication in itself of the confidence the staff has in the school."

Community participation is a two-way street. If the schools are interested in community participation at the convenience of the schools as well as on the basis of the desires of the parents in the community, then a common ground of operation exists. "Something that has mitigated against and is in the process of destroying community participation is publicly paid teacher aides," an administrator declared. "The minute you put them on the payrolls, they are no longer community participants; they are agents of the system and subject to its control. The minute you start this practice of paying one community member and not another, you have problems on your hands. With every move we make as public educators to expand the process of such paid involvement, we are destroying the potential for community participation."

"It seems to me that most of our community involvement programs almost become interference at times," an educator observed. "Perhaps this is why the school administration is always concerned about them. Maybe it is because they tend to become adult kinds of programs rather than being tied to learning. As a school person I am hoping to find more understanding from the industrial-commercial complex. I would like to see an acceptance of a different way of conducting school. The community itself should be the school. I do not favor this concept where the people in the community come into the schools. Instead the schools should be spreading out into the surrounding communities. We have examples of these trends. The Parkway Program of Philadelphia is a direction. We need to look to such pluralism in education and realize that many ways to accomplish education are available to young people. The first thing to understand is that everyone's educational goal is not going to be the same. Once we accept this pluralism, then we can start to create an educational system that both permits and encourages divergent means of learning. We then will start to draw upon the commercial-industrial complex as a schooling institution."

Citizens' councils and advisory committees are important instruments of communication. Through them the school may learn community attitudes, hopes, and aspirations. Studies undertaken by such groups can provide a wealth of valuable information about the number, characteristics, and educational needs of adults as well as children in the community. Councils composed of businessmen, labor union leaders, and professional people can provide information on current edu
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interference at times," an educator observed. "Perhaps this is why the school administration is always concerned about them. Maybe it is because they tend to become adult kinds of programs rather than being tied to learning. As a school person I am hoping to find more understanding from the industrial-commercial complex. I would like to see an acceptance of a different way of conducting school. The community itself should be the school. I do not favor this concept where the people in the community come into the schools. Instead the schools should be spreading out into the surrounding communities. We have examples of these trends. The Parkway Program of Philadelphia is a direction. We need to look to such pluralism in education and realize that many ways to accomplish education are available to young people. The first thing to understand is that everyone's educational goal is not going to be the same. Once we accept this pluralism, then we can start to create an educational system that both permits and encourages divergent means of learning. We then will start to draw upon the commercial-industrial complex as a schooling institution."

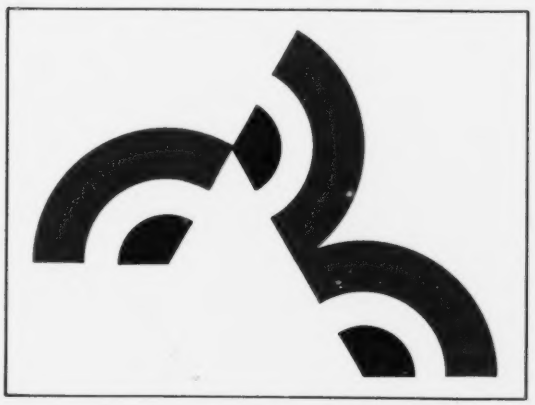
Citizens' councils and advisory committees are important instruments of communication. Through them the school may learn community attitudes, hopes, and aspirations. Studies undertaken by such groups can provide a wealth of valuable information about the number, characteristics, and educational needs of adults as well as children in the community. Councils composed of businessmen, labor union leaders, and professional people can provide information on current educational needs as well as some evaluation of the school program as reflected in the work of employees who graduated from the local schools.

A school unaware of the dynamics of change among the people it should serve fails in its basic responsibility. "The idea of educating for employment is on its way out as a concept," a participant asserted. He said the emerging idea is to prepare people for life, for living, for understanding their own nature, and for realizing all that is within them as a person. "To deal with education as it was practiced in yesteryear, or even today, is not as practical as trying to deal with what is ahead. I think that school boards have to start looking at their roles as managing opportunities. They deal too much with their problems. When dealing with the community, they are dealing with an earlier generation, its concepts, and established conditions. That will not serve today's youngsters." An educator agreed saying, "I think it is a truism now that most people define school according to the school they attended."

Education needs a means whereby what is taught and learned in school is no longer dominated by routine or tradition but continually renewed with fresh ideas, divergent methods of instruction, and different ways of analyzing familiar disciplines.

Communication is still the key to public understanding, but the group emphasized that this communication must be a two-way street with feedback from the community followed by recognizable responses from school officials.

WHO IS REALLY MAKING THE DECISIONS?



A public enterprise of such magnitude as the school is bound to be of concern at some time or place to the community power structure. Every community has a power structure which is the relative distribution of decision making among the groups of people in a school district. Decisions which are vital to the school are quite frequently of considerable concern to the power structure. Such decisions as the selection or dismissal of a superintendent, the location of a new school, the business firm from which school supplies are to be purchased, or the issuance of school bonds often are of primary interest.

It follows, therefore, that any realistic program of school-community relations must include an analysis of the nature and characteristics of the power structure and some guides for coping with it. Educators must attempt to understand the community power structure and to provide leadership in influencing that structure to accept sound educational ideas. A discussant pointed out that "if an individual administrator advocates something that is not acceptable to the political power bases, he, the program, or both are not likely to endure because he does not have a power base from which to operate."

In the past, educators have turned their backs on the power structure in the mistaken belief they were separated from politics by a non-partisan, elected school board and an appointed superintendent. In many instances, they have been brutally manipulated as a result. A major characteristic of the power structure is its lack of social responsibility. Its power is wielded largely in attempts to influence the community to make decisions that coincide with its own ends.

Schools cannot be promoted to members of the power structure on the basis of their being good for children. Members of the formal power structure are more interested in what will develop a progressive community. Schools will garner more support from this group if they are presented on the basis that they will build good communities and a better economic system. School people tend to shun the community leadership that is necessary to bring endorsement of the innovative ideas going on in their schools. The permanence of change depends on
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Often neglected is the influence of the power structure in educational change. People do not follow the innovators. They are usually ostracized. People more likely will follow the power leaders. These individuals can legitimatize and ensure the permanence of change. There are ways to neutralize much of the local power structure's directiveness. The school as a public enterprise should supply full information to the public. There is no place for secrecy, concealment, intrigue, or half-truths in the operation of the community school. In the relationship of the school to the power structure of a community there is no better shield against the pressures which may be imposed than a policy of full, free, and uncompromising publicity. To this end a participant called for the development of informational programs that go into the community in more than just news releases. "The people need to see their superintendent other than behind a long table at the school board meeting, and they need to see their local principal other than behind his desk," this individual remarked. A public relations program that makes it standard procedure to disclose the facts of school operation will, in many cases, forestall attempts by the power structure or other types of pressure groups to influence school decisions for selfish purposes.

Whether he likes it or not, the school administrator cannot escape the implications of the power structure for the operation of the school and for the issues which arise in the school community.

A PROPOSED MODEL

Seminar participants hit hard on the point that parental involvement is not the issue. The big move is in the direction of community involvement. "It may be that this problem is part of the 'alternatives in education' written up in the educational press," a participant stated. "The schools are going to have to start moving into and using the entire community as the basis for their educational programs. Too many young people are coming out of our high schools today having never put in an honest full day's labor. They have missed this maturing and self-disciplining process that comes with the responsibility of a job. Educators cannot duplicate the job situation on the school premises. It must be provided in the community. This is why each student should be required to take a term of work experience. Any administrator or teacher who cannot see the learning value in such an experience is kidding himself!"

A discussant proposed a model for the group's consideration of deep community involvement in the schools. "It is pretty clear that the school people do not want help with the kind of things they think they can do best. For example, they do not want help with teaching basic skills. The community probably does not have the expertise to help the schools here beyond putting volunteers in the classroom to assist the teacher. Such instruction is their responsibility including skill development and human relations in the school."

This individual called for every school to have a community education committee to advise on what education should take place out of the school in the community. "This committee would be a function of the school and would decide what part of the community should be involved in the learning process. I foresee such a committee consisting of minority group leaders, city or county commissioners, and other people who are in charge of other institutions outside of the school."

Once such a committee is established and operating, school administration might include an individual who is the director of community learning. His job would be to see that people are placed and have learning and working opportunities in the community. As the presenter envisioned it, this is a committee which will help reform the secondary school to get the students out of the school and into the community in learning situations. "I am not talking about advising. I mean a group of people empowered to get youngsters jobs in the community and provide feedback to the school on the courses and skills that the youngsters need for certain vocations. It would be much more than what we presently see taking place in the guidance department of most schools."

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SESSION II

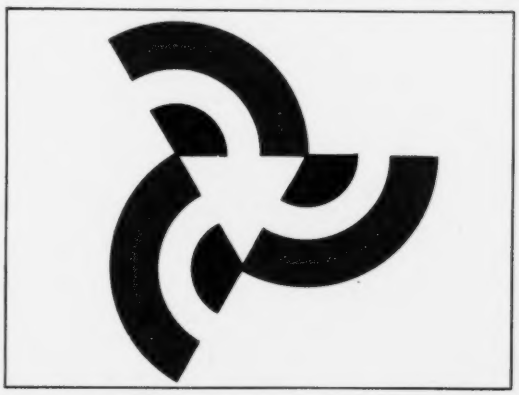
THE BUSINESS ELEMENT

A Position Statement

A BUSINESSMAN'S VIEWPOINT ON SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Edward N. Hodges III
Michigan Bell
Detroit, Michigan

Business needs education and education needs business. That statement is such a truism that it almost sounds trite. I am not an educator, and so I do not know about the various theories and concepts which educators define as the purposes of education. I do not claim to know anything about using education



to "prepare children for life," to "develop the whole child," or of educators serving as "substitute parents." I know nothing about the "humanistic education" program in Louisville reported in the February 5, 1972 issue of **Saturday Review.** I do not know about early learning concepts, the track system, slow achievers, gifted children, or the radical learning approach.

There are some other things I do not know. I do not know about the Montessori Method, teacher-pupil ratios, or Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. I do not know about such educational theorists as Thorndike and John Dewey. I do not understand magnet schools, educational parks, or performance contracts. Educators have some other things that baffle me. I do not know about the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the California Mental Maturity Test, or the Sequential Test of Education Progress.

There is much about education that I do not know. One thing I **do** know. As a businessman, I know that we in business and industry need the end products of public education. We need young men and women who have been taught to read and write and handle arithmetic. We need high-school graduates who can learn to handle our jobs. This is one reason — perhaps selfish but certainly pragmatic — why business should exert every effort to assist educators in producing well-educated graduates.

There is another reason, a larger reason, for business assistance to education. It is something called community involvement or school-community relations. In some circles, it is called corporate responsibility.

Speaking of its concern with education, the Chrysler Corporation has said, "The company realizes that America will progress only as the knowledge and ability of its individual citizens at all levels of society progress. Education is

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Speaking of its concern with education, the Chrysler Corporation has said, "The company realizes that America will progress only as the knowledge and ability of its individual citizens at all levels of society progress. Education is the wellspring of the creativity and know-how that made America great — and can make it greater. If this source dries up, America's greatness is likely to dry up too." Chrysler is a company which has done much to assist education to improve the educational process, particularly in Detroit.

My assignment is to present industry's viewpoint and give a brief accounting of some of industry's contributions to education and the development of better school-community relations. I want to share with you some of my personal thinking and touch briefly on some of Michigan Bell's educational activities.

In the first place, many of us in industry have tended at times to criticize educators — and with good reason. However, while criticizing we have not gone personally to educators to offer our assistance. More often than not, I suspect we have been fearful that the educators would reject us. So we have been sitting back and waiting for educators to come to us and ask for help.

There is another side to this coin. In all probability, many educators would like to use the resources and expertise of industry, but they have been shy about approaching the business world.

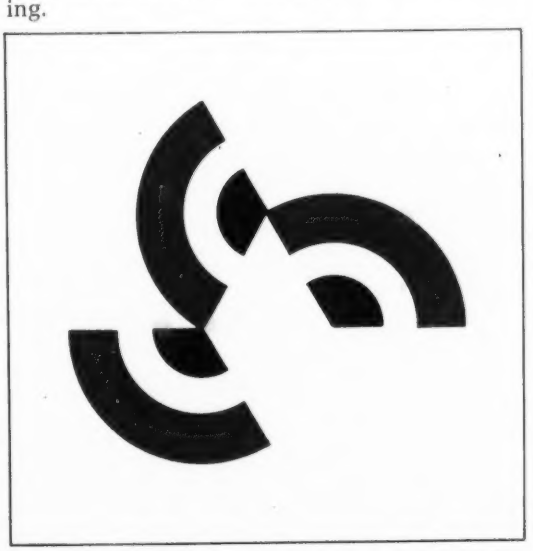
Today there is evidence of a new environment. Businessmen and women are less hesitant about offering their services to educators, and many educators are taking the initiative and approaching us. This is as it should be. Business is a part of the total community, and it has a responsibility to concern itself with community problems including educational problems and more particularly the problems of urban education.

Let me share with you some of the educational activities of my company. I prefer to discuss Michigan Bell because I know it best.

A few months ago our management training section assisted the Port Huron School System by presenting two-day training sessions to all of the school administrators in the system. They employed one of the training packages which we use for our own management personnel. It is known as the Organizational Development Program and is designed to strengthen administrative and supervisory techniques.

At Cooley High School in Detroit we introduced a mini-accounting course. This program was developed by a member of Michigan Bell's Comptroller's Operations Department, and we use it to upgrade our management employees' knowledge of accounting practices and principles. The program consists of a programmed instruction book to be completed at home or office before any classroom activities. This is followed with three days of classroom exercises which include all the accounting techniques involved in starting a business, operating it for one year, and liquidating it at the end of the year. In an experiment with 20 Cooley High students, we found that they were able to proceed through the material at a rate comparable to our employees. At the conclusion of the course, the students were able to discuss the need to control expenses and other facets of business which reflect on profits including such complex factors as rate of return, capital depreciation, and depreciation reserves.

It is of interest to note that some of these students had no previous exposure to accounting.



On the college level we have established a working relationship with Albion and Ferris State Colleges. At Albion, we are working with administration and faculty in the development of a business education seminar to be held on campus next fall. Several months ago we participated with two other companies in a special dialogue on corporate social responsibility. The upcoming business education seminar is an outgrowth of the dialogue held last year.

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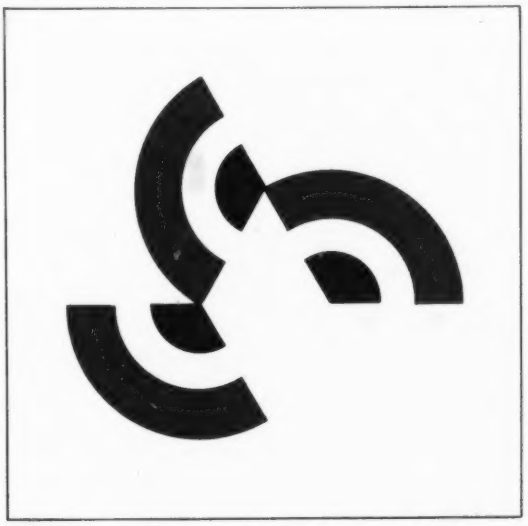

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At Ferris State we have been working with the school of business. A number of company experts have conducted a series of lectures on special subjects requested by faculty members. These experts and other company personnel are on an on-call basis and are available to the college upon request.

The most notable and continuing example of Michigan Bell assistance to educators is the Educational Partnership Program with Northern High School in Detroit. This operation, the first of its kind in the nation, is now in its fifth year.

The principal objectives of the Northern High relationship are

- to help enrich the educational process at Northern
- to help the students prepare for the world of work

A key ingredient to the Michigan Bell involvement is that we are not educators but rather the educators' assistants. In all of our activities we are under supervision of the teachers and the administration, and we would not have it any other way. I should like to describe a few of the activities for you.

A Michigan Bell supervisor developed a programmed course in basic electricity which we call "The World of Electricity and Electronics." This course is used as an introduction to the electronics classes at Northern. We also developed and gave to the school the hardware associated with the programmed instructions.

This year we began testing a new technique for teaching reading at Northern. It is called the Peer Mediated Management Instruction System. It was developed by American Telephone and Telegraph with the assistance of a professor from the City College of New York. The method employs a buddy system. The students alternate teaching and being taught by each other. When this technique was initiated in a New York Telephone Company class of

employees with reading problems, the average improvement in reading levels was twice as great in one-half time when compared to traditional methods. This program has an additional advantage of being relatively inexpensive when compared to other innovative approaches to reading improvement. It can be offered to large numbers of students without the requirement of purchasing expensive equipment. We expect much from this program.

Still another activity is our tutorial program. Each semester Michigan Bell provides from 30 to 40 management volunteers to serve as tutors. What is so special about this? Many schools and students have tutors. The difference is that our tutors go to the school during school hours and on company time! Most of them tutor twice a week, two periods at a time.

Another activity is the Employment Readiness Course. This is a six-week program taught as a part of an economics course. It is conducted by a member of Michigan Bell's employment office. Employment readiness teaches Northern's students the fundamentals of getting a job. It covers such things as preparing an employment application, preparing for the interview, taking employment tests, and conducting one's self during interviews.

We also are assisting at Northern in the data processing field. A company computer expert serves as an assistant to the data processing instructor. After the students write their own computer programs, these programs are run through the company's computers. In addition, the students visit Bell's computer facility to get actual "hands on" experience to increase their understanding of computers.

Many other Michigan Bell educational activities are going on at Northern. However, time will not permit me to go into all of them. I would like to tell you about just one other. For the past four summers we have operated Project 50. It runs for six weeks and is for 50 students who need remedial help in reading, mathematics, and science. In case you are wondering how we can get 50 youngsters to give up six weeks of their summer vacation for still more school, the answer is easy. Each student receives a daily stipend to attend Project 50. However, if they are late or absent, they are docked in pay. This is the way it works in the world of work, and we want the students to learn this fact early. As far as the teaching is concerned, the company does not handle this. Each summer we have hired three of Northern's top teachers. We have told them to be as creative as they know how. They have come up with some exciting teaching techniques. Based on achievement tests given at the beginning and end of Project 50, most of the students have been able to raise their reading and math levels from one-half to two grades in six weeks.

My reason for telling you about these various activities is not to try and impress you with Michigan Bell's assistance to the field of education. It is to demonstrate how schools and companies can collaborate in joint efforts to make learning more exciting and meaningful to today's students. It does not have to be Michigan Bell. Any company can loan its employment manager to teach an employment readiness course. Any company with a computer can give help to a data processing class. Any company with a management development program can lend its aid to a group of school administrators. Any company can make tutors available. In other words a wealth of expertise is available in large and small companies. Only two steps are needed. One, business needs to offer its help to educators. Now, educators need to go to business and ask for help. It is really very simple. You should try it.

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WHAT BUSINESS HAS AND IS TRYING TO DO

There was a general consensus that a good deal of hesitancy and insecurity is evident on the part of school people about how much they want to open their arms to industry. "In my company, we have been trying to get cooperative programs going with schools for years," a businessman told the group. "We have experienced a lot of suspiciousness of our motives by the school people." A school public relations person agreed with this accusation saying many school administrators do not want business or community involvement because they see that as complicating the problems they already have.

A superintendent laid the blame for the lack of action upon both houses. "From the school person's standpoint, the illusion of reluctance has been evident on the part of both parties to make the initial contact. This has come about in part because of the frustrations that each have experienced as they have made rather tentative overtures and have been rebuffed or have felt unwanted.

"As a guideline from the school's standpoint, I contend that if the school administration really has an inclination in this direction, it should look for an organization or company large enough to have a manpower development and training arm. This is a

company which is applying some of its resources to the development of manpower. There will be an office and an officer receptive to involvement work. If it is just the personnel office, you might get the kind of reception that is going to turn you off."

Another educator said that in his experience with industry, the further away from the home office, the more production-related activities occur in the facility and the less willing the people are to participate and take time out of their responsible positions to work in the local schools. "If you are in a large city, you have the people from the management cadre who will work with you, but when you get into the smaller communities where the company's people are operating on a production line or similar responsibility, they cannot take the time away from their jobs nor do they have the expertise or the interest. They are production oriented."

A businessman said that a consortium of the smaller industries located in the community could be assembled in such a case. "It will be a tough assignment, but it probably could be done, possibly through the local chamber of commerce or the Jaycees. In some instances you might be able to use a state agency or association as an intermediary to get an involvement effort going."

One participant wondered how broad the interest of business and industry really is. "In many cases the business people have been vocationally oriented only at the high-school level through programs designed to produce better potential employees for their assembly lines. If this is true nationally, then their interest is very narrow. We would be better off to utilize them strictly in this area and not attempt to make industry become involved in the full spectrum of education," he ventured. "On the other hand, perhaps we need to work closer with businessmen to broaden them into these other concerns. I am just not sure to what degree we can interest business and industry in school affairs."

A noneducator pointed out to the group that if the company's only reason for becoming involved in the school is to transfer the financial burden of training from its shoulders to those of the public, then there are some legitimate concerns to be considered. At what point does it switch from involvement to transferring responsibility? He foresaw grave problems with industry involvement.

A businessman experienced in school involvement spoke to this concern. "I think

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realistically that we have to create some kind of symbiosis where the self-interests on both sides are being served. You cannot expect industry's continuing support in areas where it does not have an interest. It is the educator's job to see that industry does not use him. We tell our people to get involved in the schools, but we ask them to get involved only in areas where they and the company can offer some expertise and be effective."

The traditional way for business to get involved in the school was on the advisory councils where the chamber of commerce education committee went in and became another confronter to the school system. The committee would say in essence what it thought the school system should be doing. This usually ended as a drawn out exercise in frustration.

One company's officials finally realized this was not the route to take. They went to the school and, in essence, said, "Hey, fellows, there ought to be some way we can get together here. What would you like us to help you do?" Even this approach was unproductive for the most part because the school people did not know what the businessmen were capable of providing and the businessmen did not know what the school people needed. Determined to help the schools, a large corporation produced a lengthy list of projects and strategies which it sent to school superintendents and principals offering specific services it could perform. So far this approach has been fairly productive.

Involvement should not be something that business is doing to schools or that schools are doing to business. It must be mutually

decided upon. How does one create the climate among the community elements to reach that kind of a mutual decision. "From my experience," a discussant remarked, "in those business-school programs that have been most successful with public schools, the school people have gone to business and asked for help in a specific area. It is a far more meaningful relationship if we are invited in than if we have to open the door and shove somebody through. I am not saying that we have to sit back and wait for education to send us an engraved invitation. Ways can be found to stimulate this interest such as distributing to schools lists of activities that business can do for schools and students."

Certainly there are pros and cons to involving business and industry directly in schools. An educator related the experiences of his school district in trying to involve business and professional people directly in the schools. The experience was not entirely satisfactory because the business people did not know how to deal with unmotivated students, they were not always punctual, and they took issue with the ways most subjects were taught. This was demoralizing to the school staff and resulted in some antagonism against lay involvement. "This school-community involvement is going to have to come through a reorganization and blending of minds accompanied by an appreciation of each other's expertise," he emphasized. "School people and business people need a thorough grounding in each other's **modus operandi** before cooperative efforts are initiated. The two groups now harbor too many prejudices and false stereotypes about the other's role."

CAN INDUSTRY PUT EDUCATION ON WELFARE?

There was considerable discussion and debate as to what kinds of involvement businessmen should legitimately be rendering to the schools. An educator suggested that business and industry could help education better if they would pool their resources and concentrate on producing quality curriculum materials. "This would assist large numbers of children rather than the present practice of engaging in small,

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A business participant acknowledged that "perhaps we in industry are guilty of taking a narrow parochial approach of what can be done within a given locality or even a single school as against taking on the whole American educational spectrum. Perhaps we can have some impact in terms of curriculum at a national level. However, most of the other problems of personnel, finance, and student motivation are more than even a group of industries can hope to cope with."

One member of the group concluded that if industry is going to come in and take the responsibility for teaching the most underachieving children in the school, as it has in some instances, industry is guilty of allowing school officials to shirk their responsibilities. Another discussant drew the following analogy. "If the automobile industry turned out inferior cars which the public purchased and repaired themselves, then the industry would continue to turn out inferior cars. The same thing is true of schools. If companies take up the slack, why should the educators do anything to remedy a bad situation? What businessmen ought to be doing is raising a public clamor about the poor job done by many schools just as consumer groups have done to industry."

Another businessman agreed with this nonclassroom role for business. He said it is the county or district superintendent's and state education official's jobs to supply the needed intellectual leadership on educational problems. "These men prescribe and define the problems. Industry's role is to flow in behind this and support these men, try to

understand their concerns and constraints, and aid them in moving forward and achieving their objectives. If we as businessmen and citizens do not believe in them or if we identify them as incompetent, then we should withdraw our support. If you do not have support and followers, you are not likely to last. This is where I can see room for effective business involvement."

Certainly communications and just plain understanding of day-to-day school operations are necessary if businessmen are to give moral or direct classroom support to schools. In one town, small groups of businessmen from the community are drawn into the schools on each of three days. Starting at 7:30 in the morning, these men go into the classes, they see what is being done in the schools, and then they are given a briefing by the administration. They are back in their own business establishments by 10 a.m. This accomplishes a lot of goodwill and support for the schools.

What seems to be forgotten by a lot of people is that education can aid business in more ways than turning out potential employees. One discussant related an experience of his company when educational consultants were called in to evaluate a training program. "After reviewing the existing program and asking us some pointed questions, they discovered that a person needed only an eighth-grade education to survive on the job, but it required a high-school graduate to complete the training course for that job. So we were trying to hire people who could swim a mile for a job that only required them to shuffle around in a mud puddle!"

WHAT DOES BUSINESS NEED FROM EDUCATION?

"As a businessman, I think school is about intellectual things. It is concerned with the training of the mind in a systematic, disciplined fashion." This participant said the superintendent too often is involved overtly or covertly in housekeeping chores. Community involvement is needed to relieve him of these responsibilities so that he can exert himself as the intellectual leader. The schools, particularly in the cities where big industry lies, are in serious difficulty and need the help that business people can give beyond paying taxes and complaining.

Another businessman noted that one factor involved in industry-education cooperation is the overemphasis on preparing a child for the next year in school rather than on how to exist in the world for 70 years or more. "Within the field of business and industry a body of knowledge is available that no one has tapped," he declared. "That is, what happened to the child after he departed school and entered the business world? We have made assumptions about what has happened, but we have not undertaken a detailed study of it. In recent years we have been able to read about a few of these people. Those are the ones who have made national headlines as assassins or leaders of riots. Then the news

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"When we talk about youngsters moving out into industry, what I am afraid they will learn is that much of the work is dull, boring, and constricting," a businessman divulged. "So we have a two-edged sword here. Industry as well as education needs to do some reevaluating and subsequent changing. Those of us in industry who set up programs for young engineers and apprentices know there is a real pitfall when we bring these people in because they are quickly disillusioned. A real question is how can we make learning and work merge into an exciting life for young people?"

Some rather harsh reality was injected by a gentleman who pointed out to the seminar members that the business world requires fewer people and retires them earlier. "I am sure personnel managers would be happier if they could have these young people not when they are 18 but when they are 35!," he quipped. "All this talk of having business and industry tell educators how to teach vocationally related skills is ridiculous. By the time people get into the labor force, all the techniques have changed anyway. The world is falling apart for many people in this country not because they do not know how to make gadgets but because they do not know what to do with themselves when they are not making gadgets. Most people can survive in the world of work. What the schools have failed to do is teach anybody how to live inside his own head."

An educator responded that the group seemed to be toying with a redefinition of what a community is, based on the interdependency between work and play. "It is not a series of enclaves. A definite flow exists among these components. To say that one confronts himself within his own head seems inadequate. We can no longer apply static paradigms for looking at dynamic systems. Work and play are not separated. Learning and living are not separated. Everything is connected to everything else," he maintained. The fact remains, according to another contributor, that students are not being taught decision-making capabilities in school. "We are not helping the child to use or challenge the knowledge we are presenting to him in the classroom."

A PLACE TO START BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

The physical sciences were designated by a discussant as a legitimate area to involve the scientific and engineering community in the school. The greatest obstacle in every case is getting the classroom teacher to accept the fact that he no longer can be "the answer man" because science is expanding much too fast for him to keep abreast of new developments. The next problem is getting him to look about the community for the necessary scientific expertise when he requires it. For example, when a chemistry teacher is conducting a course and he comes to the section dealing with analytical equipment, it is quite conceivable that he has lost touch with what the latest analytical tools are if he has been out of school for more than five years. If he can accept this fact and solicit the cooperation of a local industrial research facility, he can set up a visit for his class to the laboratory to see a mass spectrometer or X-ray crystallography equipment and be briefed by the technician.

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If that is not possible, then perhaps he can get the chemist to come to the school and discuss this equipment with the students. In some cases, the salesman for such equipment companies might supply literature on this type of equipment and talk to the students about its use in the laboratory. The same thing can occur in biology. "If the subject is genetics and the topic is DNA, a term unknown when most of us went to college, the instructor might ask a local medical doctor to give a presentation on it," a contributor explained. "If the subject of organ transplants raises moral issues, then the local ministerial association could be of help in supplying a speaker on this controversial topic."

The possibilities of community help and variety really are unlimited if the teachers and administrators will be imaginative in considering their subjects and how to keep them current. This speaker said that the physical sciences are one of the easiest areas to break down teacher resistance to outside help. Much of this teacher resistance is well founded.

One member of the group said that if he wanted to start a fight, the easiest way to do it was to let a physicist go in and tell a high-school physics teacher how to teach. "If I confine that discussion to what to teach, the problem disappears." There is common ground upon which the teacher of a subject and the practitioner of the subject can work together. It is a matter of taking the practitioner and letting him make his input on what is needed in terms of output and then letting the teacher apply his expertise in terms of how the output is developed to the point that it is a salable skill.

SESSION III

THE EDUCATIONAL ELEMENT

A Position Statement

AN EDUCATOR'S VIEWPOINT ON SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Glen F. Wegner
School Superintendent
Lompoc, California

The need for establishing a meaningful communications system between the schools and the community has never been more urgent. However, the implications for establishing better lines of communication are most complex because communications are encumbered with confused semantics, historical procedures, and individual interpretations and reporting.

In analyzing the responsibilities of developing a functional corporate public relations program, it is immediately clear from the superintendent's point of view that "the public" is a composite of many special entities with diverse and invested interests composed of staff, students, parents, non-parents both young and old, economic interests, business interests, and political interests.

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The historical position of administrative sovereignty that boards of education and superintendents have held has been a contributing factor in the rise of militancy during the past few years among teachers, administrators, and school board members. Another more subtle factor has been the quest for power by the teachers and their professional organizations. This militancy has caused the public to question the solidarity of the school system. The labor-management conflict has generated an entirely new set of data for the community to try to comprehend. If they were confused before about their schools' programs and activities because of charges and countercharges, they are even more confused now.

Unfortunately, school personnel have barricaded themselves within their profession by carefully planned and executed legislation. They also have confused the public with their educational jargon. Lack of candor coupled with protective manipulations by the profession has created mistrust and apprehension in the minds of the people in general.

Schools, like any other organization, reflect the quality of their leadership. In examining the qualifications for educational leadership, one finds it is rare for a college to be selective in admitting candidates for an administrative credential. This is particularly true of the professional training for the position of superintendent. In most colleges the training is still based upon antiquated curricula and often taught by peripheral academicians.

In my opinion, one of the major reasons for many of the problems confronting education today is the lack of professional quality in the superintendent.

A superintendent trained under an improved academic program would be better prepared to give strong leadership in developing a total educational program. The fundamental structure for good public relations includes all aspects of school business where there is contact with the public such as employment practices,

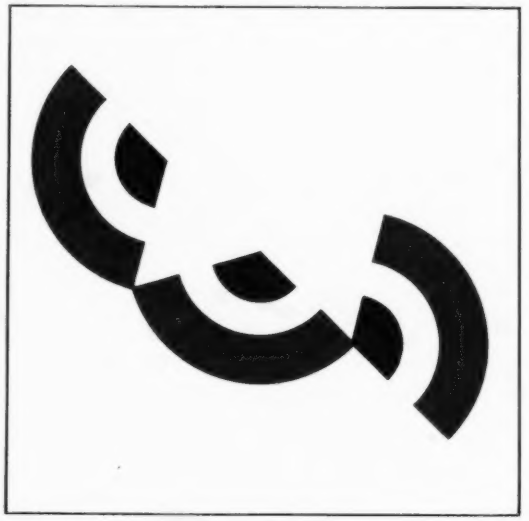
purchasing procedures, transportation, dissemination of news, publications, and cooperative relations between parents, students, and civic and business groups. Public relations seminars would be organized for the employees' participation. As an example, workshops would be conducted by telephone company public relations representatives for all school-system employees and students who are responsible for telephone communications.

It is evident that currently the public is manifesting a greater concern about all aspects of the schools' programs. Much of this concern could be alleviated if the superintendent and the board of education could see the need for establishing a sound public relations program as a permanent part of the central office organization. Too often and to the detriment of the school's posture, the superintendent and the board of education have employed superficial applications of public relations techniques in an attempt to placate the public or to vindicate the school's position or program.

School systems have used questionable tactics in attempting to gain public support for the passage of tax elections. The questionable tactics usually take the form of a veiled threat such as eliminating the athletic programs or other desirable school activities. Then, too often, when the public has not supported the tax election, the school districts have somehow been able to maintain most, if not all, of the programs they had threatened to eliminate. They have accomplished this by making budgetary adjustments. Without question, action of this type creates mistrust of the school's leadership.

The more knowledgeable and possibly prophetic critics are alleging that the American school system, in general, is in or near a state of disaster. These allegations by critics cannot be ignored by the school community.

Schools can no longer shrug their corporate shoulders and dismiss these charges and actions as though they did not exist or label the critics or student dissenters as uninformed reactionaries. Schools must respond to these allegations or questions by honest, critical self-analysis and evaluations and seriously make an effort to improve those areas of concern, if they expect to have public support.



It absolutely is imperative that school systems not be defensive. They must report with candor to their communities and attempt to establish procedures whereby they can intelligently carry on meaningful dialogues. Avenues should be established for the purpose of soliciting responses from the community, in order that realistic viewpoints are reached concerning school issues.

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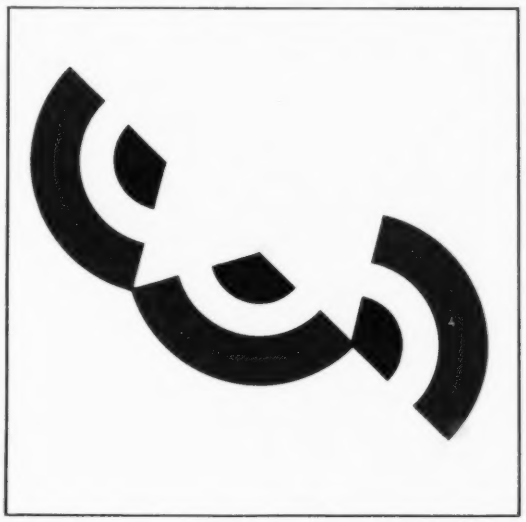

It absolutely is imperative that school systems not be defensive. They must report with candor to their communities and attempt to establish procedures whereby they can intelligently carry on meaningful dialogues. Avenues should be established for the purpose of soliciting responses from the community, in order that realistic viewpoints are reached concerning school issues.

The public's image of the school system consists of the students and staff who form the corporate body of the district. Even though the school composition is basically a homogeneous institution, it is still composed of many diverse points of view, organizationally and individually. Each is a part of the mosaic that forms the image which is presented to the public. The membership also includes the board of education who speaks either collectively or individually about the school district.

The image and attitude that the general public has about its school system have most likely been developed by the amount of contact the individual has had with the system and the candid reports that have been given by the students.

Probably the greatest public relations agent in the school system for interpreting the school to the community is the student himself. The product of our schools, the children, creates in the overall assessment either a positive or negative image of the school system.

If the news released by the school district about its educational program is in agreement with what the students say, parents feel the school system is credible; but, if there is disagreement, the weighted value is in favor of what the student reports over what is released or stated officially.

Parents are becoming an important part of the fabric of the public relations structure. There are more teacher aides and volunteers in elementary classrooms than at any previous time. This basic school relationship is helping to build bridges of understanding which have been long overdue.

To establish sound school-community relations, it is imperative that all aspects of the school's operations and the achievements of the pupils be set prominently before the people to give them the opportunity to understand the direction the school is taking.

PART OF THE PROBLEM SOME OF THE TIME

Many of the misunderstandings between school and community are caused by a breakdown of communications. Often the community does not understand what the school is trying to do, the school does not understand what the community expects it to do, or both.

A school public relations person voiced concern over the assumptions that school districts tend to distribute only propaganda, and that school districts are not actively seeking voluntary parental involvement because they do not know how to handle it.

"Based on my experience, I say that the crux of the matter rests with the school leadership or lack of it," this communicator said. "Nothing constructive happens in any group situation until someone takes command! If the superintendent does not believe in community involvement, any effort in this area will be only a travesty. We need to sow seeds of ideas to find out what works. For example, a principal might organize retired teachers from his locality into a welcoming committee for parents and children coming into his school for the first time. This helps to form good community relations before people are ever brought into the schools. Too often, we want to make big overnight changes. It does not work. Community involvement programs have to be built. We are talking about trust and understanding. You do not gain that out of a news release or televised school board meeting. It comes from repeated person-to-person contacts!"

One important reason for the lack of effective school-community communication is the traditional belief of school administrators that they can be their own public information officer. In many cases, school officials get in trouble because they do not have the help of specialists in this field on their staffs. Others cannot find such specialists to employ.

Nothing documents better the neglect of educational public information than the lack of research on problems in this field. Only 12 schools of education and six schools of journalism, located in 16 different institutions, were found by one survey to have faculty members researching this field. The total numbers of professors involved was a mere 33. In only 10 universities was help available to support research apart from the regular budget. The amounts must have been small because only one school was willing to report its budgetary commitment. Research fellowships for students majoring in educational public information are equally scarce. Only 15 institutions provide help for students. Apathy by graduate schools, disinterest on the part of school administrators, p
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In the First Annual Survey of the Public Schools conducted in 1969 by Gallup International, two of the polling organization's 13 conclusions were:

- While the American people seem reasonably well-informed about school activities, they are ill-informed about education itself.
- The public would like more information about modern education, new methods, and new ideas. In short, they need and ask for information that is presently not provided by the various media of communication.

The 1970 survey prompted these observations by the Gallup organization.

- A growing segment of the populace would like to have more objective data on student achievement.
- Up to this point in history, the majority of citizens have been quite willing to take the word of school boards and educators that the schools are doing a good job. Evidence in the present study indicates that this way of judging the quality of education may be in for a change.
- The public has an appetite for more information about the schools. It is important to tell the public about the schools, but it also is incumbent upon the schools to listen to the public's views and, after serious examination, to take steps to meet just criticisms.

Past experience shows that too often the public expects to hear from the school district

officials only when more money is needed.

Boards of education and administrators must realize that public relations is communications, and communications is not "Madison Avenue" promotion. Communications is a system for transmitting information.

The board and administration should survey the opinions of the public, staff, and students as a primary guide to the district's public relations effort. The board then has a good idea of what the public, staff, and students understand as well as what they need and want to know.

The school is in an enviable position to take advantage of person-to-person and mass communication. Discussing techniques of communication, a participant told the group of research, he had conducted as a graduate student, that found face-to-face contact more effective than indirect contact. He proved further in his thesis that a combination of the two was the most effective of all. Probably no institution has more and better opportunities for person-to-person communication with the people it serves than a school. Few other organizations have the full range of mass media available to them, and none can secure their use at a lower cost. Many school systems, however, not only have failed to utilize these media but have not even recognized their existence.

Communications is a continuous operation, but a discussant said its job is not to sell the schools to the public because they already own them. "It is a matter of making a stockholders' report and letting the public know what they invested in and what is being done to make the schools better."

GOOD PRESS OR BAD PRESS?

The school system that finds news media reporting only on racial discord, drug problems, or student militancy in the schools had better analyze what kind of information it is bringing to the attention of the news media and public, and how it is doing it.

School administrators who complain that the news media are interested only in controversy and sensation generally cannot decide what the public wants and needs to be informed about, and then cannot figure out how to tell their story in a way that will convince the news media and the public that the story is worth knowing. The educator should make every legitimate effort to establish and maintain effective press relations.

Educators must realize that it is far more desirable to have reporters, photographers, and television crews working on stories in the school system than to rely on coverage by formal press releases. If a biology class is sampling the local water sources for their level of pollution, the news media should be invited to come i
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Educators must realize that it is far more desirable to have reporters, photographers, and television crews working on stories in the school system than to rely on coverage by formal press releases. If a biology class is sampling the local water sources for their level of pollution, the news media should be invited to come in and talk with the teachers and students involved. The media should be encouraged to take their own pictures. The results ordinarily will be far superior to what the district could expect from stories prepared in the central office and accompanied by a stock photograph.

An important component of a school district's communications should involve candid interviews with representatives of the news media who cover the district. The purpose of this is to find out such things as how they get school news in the district, how they prefer to do it, and whether they have easy access to news sources.

It is essential to work hard at good relations between the school district and the news media. This means that news media representatives are encouraged to have personal contact with responsible district officials. Problems between the district and news media should be resolved, if at all possible, quickly and by personal communication between appropriate school officials and news media representatives.

One of the first responsibilities that schoolmen have in dealing with their critics is to purge themselves of that traditional propensity to hang labels on people. Since one cannot help but respond to people in terms of the labels that are hung on them, to insist on stereotyping dissenters as extremists is to recondition the tone of any communication with these individuals. Whatever a school administrator does in dealing with the emerging and vocal community groups, he must seek first to effect a relationship that is built on mutual respect, a difficult but not impossible endeavor.

Perhaps the demands of the disgruntled citizens would not appear so unreasonable if professional educators would bring about more serious examination of the goals of education in America. The public is becoming increasingly aware of its stake in education and is insisting on more complete knowledge of the enterprise which so directly affects it.

These are uncomfortable times for schoolmen. Educators have been so consumed in conducting business as usual that they find themselves totally unprepared to deal with healthy dissent. Whether educators will it or not, the public has something to say and the right to say it. Moreover, many of these citizens are ready to demonstrate their determination to be heard.

On this point an educator warned that businessmen and the general public ought to be sure they are dealing with the decision makers of the school district and not with people down the line who may bear a grudge against their superiors. "If I were going into a business, I would not talk with a production-line worker or foreman about the organization's policies or problems because he could turn me off. I would speak with management personnel, preferably the company president. Otherwise, I could go away and say that organization does not want schools involved." This speaker pointed out that industry people who contact only teachers, counselors, or even principals are not necessarily availing themselves of the institutions' top management policy. "The people who are the decision makers are actually the ones who can provide the most assistance for people who want to work with schools."

ARE SCHOOLS OVERLOADED WITH RESPONSI-BILITY?

An educator confessed that a subtle, undeveloped conspiracy — perhaps between industry, labor, and the school — aimed at keeping youngsters in school seems evident to him. "We talk of higher education or is it really longer education? We keep creating more and more structures to keep people out of the real world. Education gets longer at both ends. We have early education, post-graduate education, and now year-round education. I wonder if our programs really do develop people to be worthwhile adults as we say they do, particularly when one looks at what happens in today's world," he declared. "These programs seem to be retarding this direction toward independence and maturity. Society has responded to this need to keep kids off the streets by simply holding them in school. The young people are responding by trying to destroy the schools. Obviously all

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The idea that education is to blame for what this country is or is not was taken to task by a noneducator in the group. "Sufficient evidence is available to show that schools do not have the major intellectual effect on children. The Coleman report revealed that roughly 80% of what children learn does not come from the schools," he asserted. "To me, this indicates that we cannot separate the schools from the community. Certainly our children are not separating them!"

What parts of the process of a child's growing up are the legitimate responsibilities of the public schools? What can citizens reasonably expect the schools to do? "We cannot expect them to do everything," a participant stated bluntly. "This is probably

one of the major problems in American society. Our expectations really go beyond the schools' ability to perform. So we need to delineate what the schools can do best and for what parts of the community they can do it. Then a community relations program should be established to fulfill these needs."

One speaker called college in today's society a vocational school at a different level of abstraction. "As we analyze a school population, we should recognize that about half of the students are 'hand' children. Yet our whole thrust is to make all children 'head' children." According to this participant, educators have not geared their curriculum to accommodate those students who are going to be hand children. "We want them all to go through algebra, geometry, and calculus."

For the most part curriculum content is not related to the capabilities and interests of the student. This man saw no necessity to launch a group of children out into the working world prior to the time when the working world will accept them. "What is needed is a dual or multi-curriculum of high quality to serve the varied abilities of a given student population."

Another discussant took issue with the previous speaker's remark that children cannot be prepared for the world of work until the work world is ready to accept them. "This is the crux of the problem. You cannot change the old because it is laced with attitudes that also have to change. What we need to do is start with something totally new. Never will we be able to change education until we change some attitudes. We are not going to change these attitudes unless we do away with the present system that we have."

DO PUBLIC SCHOOLS WORK FOR THE FACTORIES AND COLLEGES ONLY?

Educators do not think of business and industry as being of any help in education, one participant claimed. "If you were to ask me what the mission of elementary and secondary schools is in preparing children and youth, my answer would be 'adulthood.' There is no other reason for elementary and secondary education. We ought to be asking ourselves, 'What should high school graduation consist of?' Certainly it should not consist of a bunch of Carnegie credits."

This individual said the only reason the high school came into being in the first place was to bridge the gap between the old grammar school and the college preparatory school. "Since the Kalamazoo Case of 1874, the schools have been doing basically that. Once you translate high-school graduation into something that is meaningful, you cannot do that job within the walls of the

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This individual said the only reason the high school came into being in the first place was to bridge the gap between the old grammar school and the college preparatory school. "Since the Kalamazoo Case of 1874, the schools have been doing basically that. Once you translate high-school graduation into something that is meaningful, you cannot do that job within the walls of the school system. If we are really interested in getting our youth prepared for adulthood, school systems had better start laying out in writing their mission in pragmatic, not philosophical, terms. They should say to the community what they see as their mission. That is the first step to community involvement because we cannot prepare youngsters for adulthood within the four walls of any elementary or secondary school. This is the charge that educators must begin to focus upon!"

Agreeing with the charge, a discussant said the problem of quality education properly rests with the educator. Community involvement must never be a substitution for poor performance by the schools. "I would hope as an educator that industrial-community involvement in the schools increases the openness and availability of both parties to each other, encourages identification of the community with the schools and the schools with the community, and supplements or complements rather than replaces what the other is doing." He defined the function of education as enlightening people to literacy and a love of learning.

The school is no longer just a school but a community learning center. People are going out from the school into appropriate jobs and life roles available in the surrounding community. At the same time, the school is working with its community to provide services within its educational environment that cannot be found locally in the industries, businesses, and homes that comprise the community. A growing two-way flow is evident that was not discernible even a few years ago.

SEMINAR CONCLUSIONS

- In order to better school-community relations, what is needed is not an expansion of public relations efforts but the creation of new ways of involvement because many traditional methods and efforts have lost their credibility in the current turbulent era.
- The school must be extended into the community, and the community must be receptive to working with the school to bring about effective utilization of a wide range of local facilities.
- School-community involvement should not result in a business or citizen group assuming any legitimate instructional responsibilities of the school.
- Educators should organize "Know Your School" days for business and community leaders. Each person should receive a thorough briefing in costs, programs and needs of the school he is visiting as well as seeing classes in operation.
- Educators must recognize responsible criticism and persevere while cooperatively working out definitions, goals, and programs that are responsive to the needs of the people the schools are designed to serve.
- Schools should publish a list of specific needs and activities with which they believe members of the business community could help. Businesses should supply to school officials lists of projects and expertise they feel could be beneficial to the students.
- Schools should avail themselves of feedback regarding what happens to the students after graduation. This information should be used to alter the school's program to equip the students better for their adult pursuits.
- School administrators must provide ways and means whereby citizens groups may work effectively and make a contribution at all levels of the educational system.
- The operating statistics and educational records of each school and the school system should always be readily available and publicized to the community.
- Citizen involvement in the schools should be actively solicited, not passively discussed.
- Schools should conduct annual surveys of school problems and needed changes. Action should result from each of these surveys including their publication in local newspapers.
- Alternative forms of education should be fostered by the public school system rather than allowed to flourish outside of public control.
- Good school-community relations is a major social responsibility and should be pursued as such. It is the responsibility of every individual and every corporation whether public, private, profit, or nonprofit.

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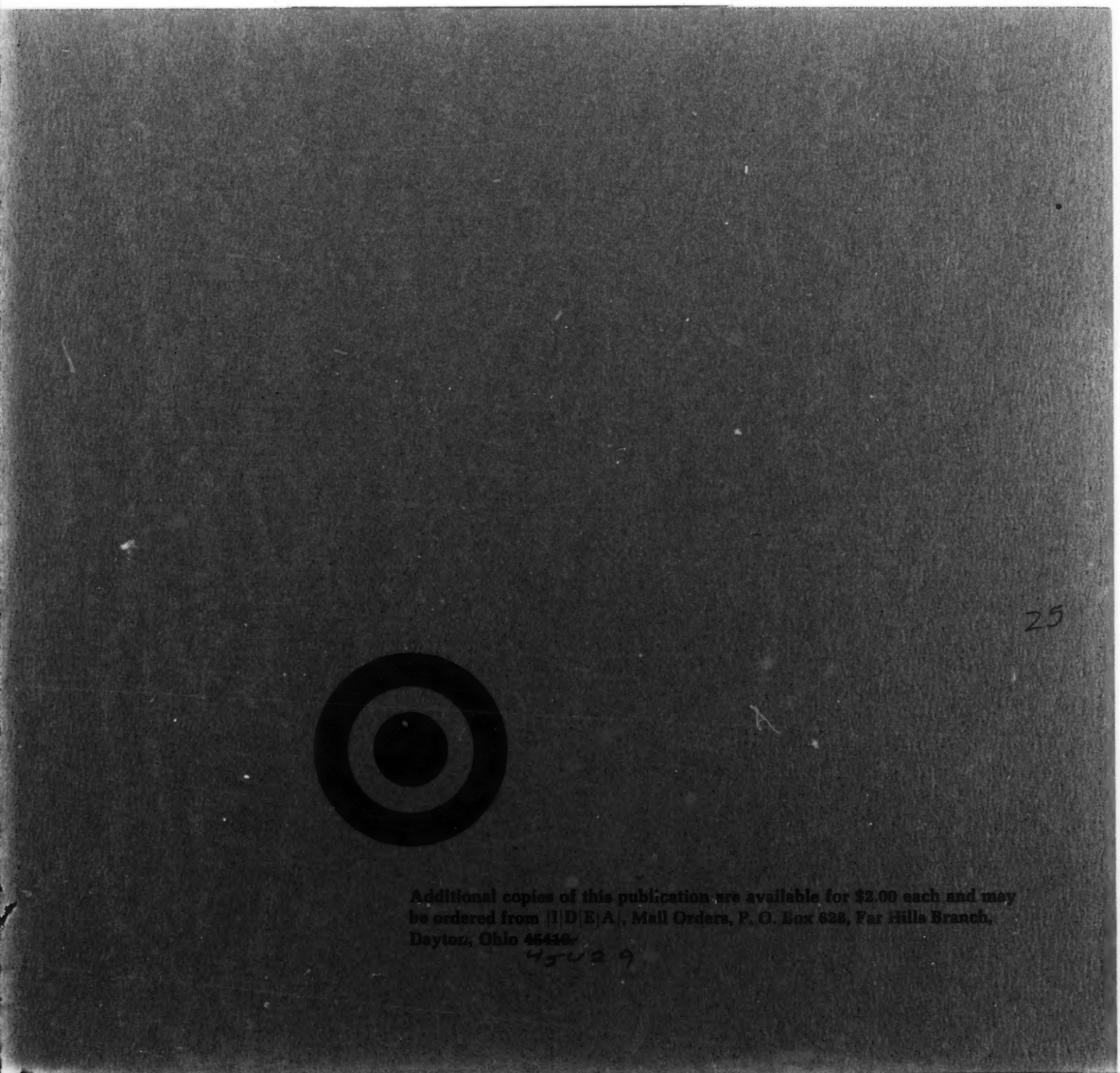

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